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**U.S.-Somaliland Security Cooperation Prospects Advance as  
House Passes National Defense Authorization Act**

*House Action Sets New Precedent in Acknowledging Somaliland's Strategic Role*

**WASHINGTON, DC** (July 14, 2022) – The Republic of Somaliland applauds the United States House of Representative's approval of legislation requiring the State Department to conduct a feasibility study and report on prospects for diplomatic engagement and a security partnership between the U.S. and Somaliland. This legislation was proposed by Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2023, which passed the House of Representatives on July 14, 2022.

This action follows [guidance](#) by the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) – in its report accompanying the NDAA – instructing the Department of Defense to provide recommendations for expanding the security partnership with Somaliland and its potential contributions to U.S. military objectives in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea region. This guidance was proposed by Representative Marc Veasey (D-TX), a HASC member who also co-chairs the Congressional Black Caucus Foreign Affairs & National Security Task Force.

The NDAA legislation requires by law that the State Department undertake this feasibility study and report, and to assess the prospect of Somaliland:

- serving as a maritime gateway in East Africa for the United States and its allies;
- countering Iran's presence in the Gulf of Aden and China's growing regional military presence;
- contributing to counterterrorism, intelligence sharing and counter-trafficking activities, including the trafficking of humans, wildlife, weapons, and illicit goods; and
- advancing regional trade and development.

"The Republic of Somaliland is deeply appreciative of the House of Representatives' commitment to strengthening the partnership between the U.S. and Somaliland," Bashir Goth, Somaliland Representative to the United States, said. "The inclusion of this amendment in the House NDAA makes clear that there is strong bipartisan support for closer cooperation." The NDAA's requirements closely align with the [Somaliland Partnership Act](#), which was co-authored by Senators Jim Risch (R-ID), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Mike Rounds (R-SD) and approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in May.

"We encourage the House and Senate to complete action on these constructive initiatives, and look forward to cooperating with both the State and Defense Departments on important and timely studies that will advance the mutual interests of our two democracies," said Bashir Goth.

These legislative advances mark another milestone in recent efforts to expand relations between Somaliland and the United States. In March, Somaliland President Muse Bihi Abdi visited Washington to

meet with Members of Congress and officials from the White House, State Department, Defense Department and other agencies. In May, General Stephen Townsend, Commander of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), and U.S. Ambassador Larry André visited Somaliland to meet with President Bihi and members of his cabinet and tour the modernized Port of Berbera and Berbera International Airport.

The full text of the NDAA amendment can be found [here](#).

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